THE LIFE

AND

PUBLIC SERVICES

OF THE

HON. JAMES KNOX POLK,

WITH A

COMPENDIUM OF HIS SPEECHES

ON

Various Public Measures.

ALSO,

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE

OF THE

HON. GEORGE MIFFLIN DALLAS.

BALTIMORE:
PUBLISHED BY N. HICKMAN,
No. 88 BALTIMORE STREET.
1844.

ENTERED, according to the Act of Congress, in the year one thousand eight hundred and forty-four, by NATHANIEL HICKMAN, in the Clerk's office of the District Court of Maryland.

JOHN MURPHY, Printer,
146 *Market street, Baltimore.*

M E H 26 III 1713

LIFE

OF

HON. JAMES K. POLK.

"James K. Polk, who is the oldest of ten children, was born in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, on the second of November, 1795, and is consequently in the 49th year of his age. His ancestors, whose original name, Pollock, has, by obvious transition, assumed its present form, emigrated more than a century ago, from Ireland, a country from which many of our most distinguished men are proud to derive their origin. They established themselves first in Maryland, where some of their descendants still sojourn. The branch of the family from which is sprung the subject of this memoir, removed to the neighborhood of Carlisle, in Pennsylvania, and thence to the western frontier of North Carolina, sometime before the revolutionary war. Its connection with that eventful struggle is one of rare distinction. On the twentieth of May, 1775, consequently more than a twelvemonth anterior to the declaration of the Fourth of July, the assembled inhabitants of Mecklenburg county publicly absolved themselves from their allegiance to the British crown, and issued a formal manifesto of independence in terms of manly eloquence, which have become 'familiar as household words' to the American people. Col. Thomas Polk, the prime mover in this act of noble daring, and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was the great uncle of the present Speaker, who is also connected with the Alexanders, Chairman and Secretary of the famous meeting, as well as with Dr. Ephraim Brevard, the author of the Declaration itself.*

* Tradition ascribes to Thomas Polk the principal agency in bringing about the Declaration. He appears to have given the notice for the election of the Convention, and (being the colonel of the county) to have superintended the election in each of the militia districts. He had been for a long time engaged in the service of the province as a surveyor, and as a member of the assembly; and was thus intimately acquainted, not only in Mecklenburg, but in the counties generally. His education had been acquired, not within the classic walls of an English university, but among his own native hills, and amidst the passions and feelings of his countrymen. Dr. Ephraim Brevard (the author of the

"Mr. Jefferson having, sincerely, no doubt, but upon merely negative grounds, questioned the authenticity of this interesting piece of history, the Legislature of North Carolina, with a becoming pride of patriotism, caused the evidence establishing its validity to be collected in a complete shape, and deposited in the archives of the State. The people of Mecklenburg were, almost to a man, staunch Whigs, in the genuine, revolutionary acceptation of the term, and have been up to the present day remarkable for their unwavering adherence to democratic principles. As an evidence of the sturdy independence which characterizes them, it is often pleasantly observed that, at the last war, they took up arms six months before, and did not lay them down until twelve months after, the government. In the contest for independence several of Mr. Polk's relatives distinguished themselves, even to the peril of life. To be allied to such a people and lineage, is a fit subject for honorable pride. Liberty does not frown upon the indulgence of a sentiment so natural. She does not reject the heritage of honor, while refusing to add to it social or political distinctions subversive of equal rights. The American people have always manifested an affectionate regard for those who bear the names of the heroes or martyrs of the revolution. They furnish not a proof of the alleged ingratitude of republics.

"The father of Mr. Polk was a farmer of unassuming pretensions, but enterprising character. Thrown upon his own resources in early life, he became the architect of his own fortunes. He was a warm supporter of Mr. Jefferson, and through life a firm and consistent republican. In the autumn of 1806 he removed to Tennessee, where he was among the first pioneers of the fertile valley of Duck river, then a wilderness, but now the most flourishing and populous portion of the State. The magical growth of a country which was but yesterday redeemed from the sole dominion of nature, is a phenomenon of great

Declaration) and Wraightstill Avery, (the first attorney-general of North Carolina) were men of the highest classical attainments, and contributing their enlightened resources to the shrewd native enthusiasm of Thomas Polk, produced a Declaration, at that time unrivalled, not only for the neatness of its style, but for the moral sublimity of its conception.—*Jones' North Carolina.*

Finally, the whole proceedings were read distinctly and audibly at the court house door, by Col. Thomas Polk, to a large, respectable and approving assemblage of citizens, who were present, and gave sanction to the business of the day.—Memoir of Rev. Humphrey Hunter.—*Ibid.*

moral and political interest, and cannot fail to impress a character of strength and enterprise upon the authors and participators of the wonderful result. How can man languish or halt when all around him is expanding and advancing with irrepressible energy? In this region Mr. Polk still resides, so that he may be said, literally, to have grown with its growth and strengthened with its strength. Of course, in the infancy of its settlement the opportunities for instruction could not be great. Notwithstanding this disadvantage—and the still more formidable one, of a painful affliction, from which, after years of suffering, he was finally relieved by a surgical operation—he acquired the elements of a good English education. Apprehending that his constitution had been too much impaired to permit the confinement of study, his father determined, much, however, against the will of the son, to make of him a commercial man; and with this view actually placed him with a merchant. Upon what slender threads hang the destinies of life! A little more and the uncompromising opponent of the Bank of the United States, and the Democratic candidate for the highest office in the gift of seventeen millions of freemen, might have been at this day, in spite of his origin and early tendencies, a Whig preacher of panics, uttering *jeremiads* for the fate of that shadowy and intangible thing yclept 'Credit System,'

> 'If shape it might be call'd, that shape had none,
> Distinguishable in member, joint or limb;
> Or substance might be call'd, that shadow seem'd,
> For each seem'd either.'

"He remained a few weeks in a situation adverse to his wishes and incompatible with his taste. Finally, his earnest appeals succeeded in overcoming the resistance of his father, and in July, 1813, he was placed first under the care of the Rev. Dr. Henderson, and subsequently at the academy of Murfreesborough, Tennessee, then under the direction of Mr. Samuel P. Black, justly celebrated in that region as a classical teacher. In the autumn of 1815 he entered the University of North Carolina, having, in less than two years and a half, thoroughly prepared himself to commence his collegiate course. It will be seen, from this hasty sketch, that the history of Col. Polk furnishes an interesting example of talent and perseverance triumphing over disheartening difficulties in early life. So frequent are such instances that it would almost seem that true

merit requires the ordeal of adverse circumstances to strengthen its temper and distinguish it from unsubstantial pretension.

"Mr. Polk's career at the University was distinguished. At each semi-annual examination he bore away the first honor, and finally graduated in 1818 with the highest distinction of his class, and with the reputation of being the first scholar in both the mathematics and the classics. Of the former science he was passionately fond, though equally distinguished as a linguist. His course at college was marked by the same assiduity and studious application which have since characterized him. His ambition to excel was equalled by his perseverance alone, in proof of which it is said that he never missed a recitation, nor omitted the punctilious performance of any duty. Habits of close application at college are apt to be despised by those who pride themselves on brilliancy of mind, as if they were incompatible. This is a melancholy mistake. Genius has even been defined the faculty of application. The latter is, at least, something better, and more available. So carefully has Mr. Polk avoided the pedantry of classical display, which is the false taste of our day and country, as almost to hide the acquisitions which distinguished his early career. His preference for the useful and substantial, indicated by his youthful passion for the mathematics, has made him select a style of elocution which would, perhaps, be deemed too plain by the shallow admirers of flashy declamation. The worst of all styles is the florid and exaggerated. It is that of minds which are, as it were, overlaid by their acquisitions. They break down beneath a burden which they have not strength to bear,—

'Deep versed in books, but shallow in themselves.'

"The mind should rather be fertilized by culture than encumbered with foreign productions. Pedantry is at once the result and proof of sciolism.

"Returning to Tennessee from the State which is, in two senses, his *alma mater*, with health considerably impaired by excessive application, Mr. Polk, in the beginning of the year 1819, commenced the study of the law in the office of the late Senator Grundy, and late in 1820 was admitted to the bar. He commenced his professional career in the county of Maury, with great advantages, derived from the connection of his family with its early settlement. To this hour his warmest friends are the

sharers of his father's early privations and difficulties, and the associates of his own youth. But his success was due to his personal qualities, still more than to extrinsic advantages. A republican in habits as well as in principles, depending for the maintenance of his dignity upon the esteem of others, and not upon his own assumption, his manners conciliated the general good will. The confidence of his friends was justified by the result. His thorough academical preparation, his accurate knowledge of the law, his readiness and resources in debate, his unwearied application to business, secured him, at once, full employment, and in less than a year he was already a leading practitioner. Such prompt success in a profession where the early stages are proverbially slow and discouraging falls to the lot of few.

"Mr. Polk continued to devote some years exclusively to the laborious prosecution of his profession, with a progressive augmentation of reputation, and the more solid rewards by which it is accompanied. In 1823 he entered upon the stormy career of politics, being chosen to represent his county in the State Legislature by a heavy majority over the former incumbent, but not without formidable opposition. He was, for two successive years, a member of that body, where his ability in debate and talent for business at once gave him reputation. The early personal and political friend of General Jackson, he was one of those who, in the session of 1823–4, called that distinguished man from his retirement by electing him to the Senate of the United States; and he looks back with pride to the part he took in an act which was followed by such important consequences. In August, 1825, being then, in his thirtieth year, Mr. Polk was chosen to represent his district in Congress, and in the ensuing December took his seat in that body, where he has remained ever since. He brought with him into the national councils those fundamental principles to which he has adhered through all the personal mutations of party. From his early youth he was a republican of the 'straitest sect.' He has ever regarded the Constitution of the United States as an instrument of specific and limited powers, and that doctrine is at the very foundation of the democratic creed. Of course he has ever been what is termed a strict constructionist, repudiating, above all things, the latitudinarian interpretations of federalism, which tend to the consolidation of all power in the central government.

"When Mr. Polk entered Congress he was, with one or two exceptions, the junior member of that body. But capacity like his could not long remain unnoticed. In consequence of the palpable disregard of the public will manifested in the election by the House of Mr. Adams, together with the means by which it was effected, a proposition was brought forward, and much discussed at the time, to amend the constitution in such manner as to give the choice of President and Vice President immediately and irreversibly to the people. In favor of this proposition Mr. Polk made his first speech in Congress, which at once attracted the attention of the country by the force of its reasoning, the copiousness of its research, and the spirit of honest indignation by which it was animated. It was at once seen that his ambition was to distinguish himself by substantial merit rather than by rhetorical display, the rock upon which most young orators split. At the same session, that egregious measure of political Quixotism, the Panama mission, which was proposed in contempt of the sound maxim, to cultivate friendship with all nations, yet engage in entangling alliances with none, gave rise to a protracted debate in both Houses of Congress. The exploded federal doctrine was upon this occasion revived, that as under the constitution the President and Senate exclusively are endowed with the treaty-making faculty, and that of originating and appointing to missions, their acts under that power become the supreme law of the land, nor can the House of Representatives deliberate upon, much less, in the exercise of a sound discretion, refuse the appropriations necessary to carry them into effect. Against a doctrine so utterly subversive of the rights and powers of the popular branch of Congress, as well as of the fundamental principles of democracy, Mr. Polk strenuously protested, embodying his views in a series of resolutions, which reproduced, in a tangible shape, the doctrines, on this question, of the republican party of '98. The first of these resolutions, which presents the general principle with brevity and force, runs thus: 'that it is the constitutional right and duty of the House of Representatives, when called upon for appropriations to defray the expenses of foreign missions, to deliberate upon the expediency or inexpediency of such missions, and to determine and act thereon as in their judgment may seem most conducive to the public good.'

"From this time Mr. Polk's history is inseparably interwoven

with that of the House. He is prominently connected with every important question, and upon every one, as by an unerring instinct of republicanism, took the soundest and boldest ground. From his entrance into public life, his adherence to the cardinal principles of the Democratic creed has been singularly steadfast. During the whole period of General Jackson's administration, as long as he retained a seat on the floor, he was one of its leading supporters, and at times, and on certain questions of paramount importance, its chief reliance. In the hour of trial he was never found wanting, or from his post. In December, 1827, two years after his entrance in the House, Mr. Polk was placed on the important committee of Foreign Affairs, and some time after was appointed, in addition, chairman of the select committee to which was referred that portion of the President's message calling the attention of Congress to the probable accumulation of a surplus in the treasury, after the anticipated extinguishment of the national debt. As the head of this committee he made a lucid report, replete with the soundest doctrines, ably enforced, denying the constitutional power of Congress to collect from the people, for distribution, a surplus beyond the wants of the Government, and maintaining that the revenue should be reduced to the exigencies of the public service.

"The session of 1830 will always be distinguished by the death blow which was then given to the unconstitutional system of internal improvements by the General Government. We have ever regarded the Maysville Road veto as second in importance to none of the acts of General Jackson's energetic administration. When the bill was returned by the President unsigned a storm arose in the House, in the midst of which the veto was attacked by a torrent of passionate declamation, mixed with no small share of personal abuse. To a member from Ohio, whose observations partook of the latter character, Mr. Polk replied in an energetic improvisation, vindicating the patriotic resolution of the Chief Magistrate. The friends of States Rights in the House rallied manfully upon the veto. The result was that the bill was rejected, and countless '*log-rolling*' projects for the expenditure of many millions of the public treasure, which awaited the decision, perished in *embryo*.

"In December, 1832, he was transferred to the committee of Ways and Means, with which his connection has been so distinguished. At that session the directors of the Bank of the

United States were summoned to Washington, and examined upon oath before the committee just named. A division of opinion resulted in the presentation of two reports. That of the majority, which admitted that the Bank had exceeded its lawful powers by interfering with the plan of the government, to pay off the three per cent. stock, was tame, and unaccompanied by pertinent facts, or elucidating details. Mr. Polk, in behalf of the minority, made a detailed report, communicating all the material circumstances, and presenting conclusions utterly adverse to the institution which had been the subject of inquiry. This arrayed against him the whole bank power, which he was made to feel in a quarter where he had every thing at stake, for upon his return to his district he found the most formidable opposition mustered against him for his course upon this question. The friends of the United States Bank held a meeting at Nashville to denounce his report. The most unscrupulous misrepresentations were resorted to in order to prove that he had destroyed the credit of the west, by proclaiming that his countrymen were unworthy of mercantile confidence. The result, however, was, that, after a violent contest, Mr. Polk was re-elected by a majority of more than three thousand. Fortunately for the stability of our institutions, the panics which 'frighten cities from their propriety' do not sweep with the same desolating force over the scattered dwellings of the country.

"In September, 1833, the President, indignant at the open defiance of law by the Bank of the United States, and the unblushing corruption which it practised, determined upon the bold and salutary measure of the removal of the deposites, which was effected in the following month. The act produced much excitement throughout the country, and it was foreseen that a great and doubtful conflict was about to ensue. At such a crisis it became important to have at the head of the committee of Ways and Means, a man of courage to meet, and firmness to sustain, the formidable shock. Such a man was found in Mr. Polk, and he proved himself equal to the occasion. Congress met, and the conflict proved even fiercer than had been anticipated. The cause of the bank was supported in the House by such men as Mr. McDuffie, Adams and Binney, not to mention a host of other names. It is instructive to look back in calmer times to the reign of terror known as the Panic Session. The bank, with the whole commerce of the country at its feet, alter-

nately torturing and easing its miserable pensioners as they increased or relaxed their cries of financial agony; public meetings held in every city with scarcely the intermission of a day, denouncing the President as a tyrant and the enemy of his country; deputations flocking from the towns to extort from him a reluctant submission; Whig orators traversing the country and stimulating the passions of excited multitudes, without respect even to the sanctity of the Sabbath; inflammatory memorials poured into Congress from every quarter; the Senate almost decreeing itself into a state of permanent insurrection, and proclaiming that a revolution had already begun; all the business of legislation in both wings of the Capitol postponed to that of agitation and panic; an extrajudicial and branding sentence pronounced upon the Chief Magistrate of the nation, in violation of usage and of the constitution,—these features present but a faint picture of the alarm and confusion which prevailed. Consternation had almost seized upon the republican ranks, thinned by desertions and harassed by distracting doubts and fears. But the stern resolve of him whose iron arm guided the helm of State, conducted the perilous conflict to a successful issue. Nor should we forget the eminent services of the individual who presided over the committee of Ways and Means. His coolness, promptitude and abundant resources were never at fault. His opening speech in vindication of the President's measure, contains all the material facts and reasons on the republican side of the question, enforced with much power and illustrated by great research. To this speech almost every member of the opposition, who spoke upon the question, attempted to reply, but the arguments which its author brought forward to establish the power of the President under the constitution, as elucidated by contemporaneous or early exposition, to do the act, which had been so boldly denounced as a high-handed and tyrannical usurpation, could neither be refuted nor weakened. Mr. McDuffie, the distinguished leader of the opposition in this eventful conflict, bore testimony, in his concluding remarks, to the 'boldness and manliness' with which Mr. Polk had assumed the only position which could be judiciously taken. The financial portion of his speech, and that in which he exposed the glaring misdeeds of the bank, were no less efficient. When Mr. McDuffie had concluded the remarks to which we have alluded, a member from Virginia, after a few pertinent observations, demanded the

prĕvious question. A more intense excitement was never felt in Congress than at this thrilling moment. The two parties looked at each other for a space, in sullen silence, like two armies on the eve of a deadly conflict. The motion of Mr. Mason prevailed, the debate was arrested, and the division proved a triumphant victory for the republican cause. The bank then gave up the contest in despair.

"The position of the chairman of the committee of Ways and Means, at all times a most arduous and responsible one, was doubly so at this session, which will form an epoch in the political annals of the country. Mr. Polk occupied it for the first time. From its organization and the nature of its duties, this committee must be at all times the chief organ of every administration in the House. At this session it was for obvious reasons peculiarly so. To attack it then was to strike at the government; to embarrass its action was to thwart the course of the administration. Extraordinary and indiscriminate opposition was accordingly made to all the appropriation bills. It was avowed in debate that it was within the scope of legitimate opposition to withhold even the ordinary supplies until the deposites were restored to the Bank of the United States; that this restitution must be made, or revolution ensue. The bank must triumph or the wheels of government be arrested. The people should never forget the perils of a contest in which they were almost constrained to succumb. The recollection should warn them not to build up again a power in the state of such formidable faculties. The tactics which we have just described threw great additional labour upon the committee, and particularly upon its chairman. Fully apprised of the difficulties he had to encounter, he maintained his post with sleepless vigilance and untiring activity. He was always ready to give the House ample explanations upon every item, however minute, of the various appropriations. He was ever prompt to meet any objections which might be started, and of quick sagacity to detect the artifices to which factious disingenuousness is prone to resort. All the measures of the committee, including those of paramount importance, relating to the bank and the deposites, were carried in spite of the most immitigable opposition. The true-hearted republicans, who conducted this critical conflict to a successful issue, among whom Mr. Polk occupies a distinguished rank, deserve the lasting gratitude of the country.

"Towards the close of the memorable session of 1834 Mr. Speaker Stevenson resigned the chair, as well as his seat in the House. The majority of the democratic party preferred Mr. Polk as his successor, but in consequence of a division in its ranks, the opposition, to whom his prominent and uncompromising course had rendered him less acceptable, succeeded in electing a gentleman, then a professed friend, but since, a decided opponent of Gen. Jackson and his measures. Mr. Polk's defeat produced no change in his course. He remained faithful to his party, and assiduous in the performance of his arduous duties. In December, 1835, he was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives, and chosen again at the extra session in September, 1837, after an animated contest. The duties of this difficult situation, it is now conceded, he discharged with rare fidelity and fairness. In the beginning unusual difficulties were thrown in his way by an animosity which was sometimes carried to an extent that called forth general animadversion. During the first session in which he presided, more appeals were taken from his decision than had occurred in the whole period since the origin of the government; but he was uniformly sustained by the House and by many of his political adversaries. Strangers of all parties who visited Washington were struck with the dignity, promptitude and impartiality with which he presided over the deliberations of the House. Notwithstanding the violence with which he had been assailed, Congress passed, at the close of the session in 1837, an unanimous vote of thanks to its presiding officer, from whom it separated with the kindest feelings; and no man could enjoy its confidence and friendship in a higher degree. His calmness and good temper allayed the violence of opposition, in a station for which his quickness, coolness and sagacity eminently qualified him."

The ensuing session, however, unfortunately presented a different state of feeling on the part of Mr. Polk's opponents. Again elevated to the high position of Speaker, his superior capabilities for the station were put to the severest test; but, notwithstanding every attempt to throw his prudence and courtesy from their balance, he sustained himself with unfaltering decision and admirable equanimity of temper. It was during this Congress that the exciting case of the Mississippi election was under an angry and extended discussion, at the close of which he was called upon to give his casting vote. It was upon the

honest exercise of this duty that Mr. Clay, then a member of the Senate, but being present upon the floor of the House, uttered the profane exclamation which has made the event memorable, while it deservedly detracted much from the character of the senator in the opinion of all virtuous minds.

The exasperation of the opposition was more notably manifested at the close of the session, and contrasted to the disadvantage of that party with the action of the House at the conclusion of the session of 1837. Then, as we have seen, he received an unanimous vote of thanks, a custom which we believe was never before opposed until at the close of the last session, when he had a seat in Congress. On the usual motion being made, it was unexpectedly met by a violent party speech, from gentlemen who, while they had to admit that the speaker had discharged his duty with dignity and ability, yet, if our recollection bears us out correctly, assigned as a reason for their vindictive opposition, that as Mr. Polk was about to become a candidate for the gubernatorial office of Tennessee, it would be giving their sanction to his pretensions, as it would afford him "political capital to trade upon!" A singular reason, surely, for an undignified and unusual act! Without this "capital" from his opponents in Congress Mr. Polk returned home, and became the Democratic candidate for the office of governor. The chances, to all appearances, were against him, conceding that the results of the late elections in Tennessee exhibited the true condition of the two parties, as divided solely upon principles. It will be remembered that in the presidential election of 1836, a portion of the Democratic party supported Judge White in opposition to Mr. Van Buren. Tennessee gave her vote to her own citizen, White's majority being 9,842. The next year, at the election for governor, Cannon, the Whig candidate, obtained a majority of 19,873 over Armstrong, Democrat. To succeed, then, Mr. Polk would have to break down a majority of nearly 20,000 votes, and that, too, against the same gentleman who received his office through that immense majority but two years before. The indomitable energy and untiring industry of Mr. Polk, however, successfully performed this Herculean task, and he came off victor in 1839 with a majority of 2,669, making a Democratic gain in the State of something over 22,000 votes. In doing this, he abandoned none of his political principles, but maintained what was called his "ultraism" and "radicalism" with the same

uncompromising sternness that distinguished him while holding a seat in Congress.

In 1840, Tennessee gave her vote to Harrison, he receiving 12,102 majority over Mr. Van Buren. The old defection produced by Judge White in 1836, had not entirely subsided, particularly in relation to Mr. Van Buren. In the following year Mr. Polk was again the candidate for Governor, but was defeated by Mr. Jones, one of the most popular Whigs in the State, not, however, without cutting down the 12,000 Whig majority for Harrison to 3,224. In 1843, he was a second time the candidate in opposition to Jones, losing his election by somewhere about the same relative vote as in 1841.

But with POLK against CLAY, no one can doubt the result in Tennessee in 1844. The Whig nominee will have to encounter an opposition in that State to which he will be obliged to succumb. The elements of Harrison's success in 1840 cannot be brought into operation in any shape. The issue in every sense will be a new one. The ghost of that "*bargain*" by which Mr. Adams was made President, will meet Mr. Clay at every step, and retribution will be demanded for that act by which ANDREW JACKSON was made to stand aside, for one whom this same Mr. Clay had taught the whole West to hate. Yes, bitterly to hate, for attempting to barter the navigation of the Mississippi to Great Britain; for giving Texas to Spain: for "an unfeeling policy, which would crimson our fresh fields with the blood of our border brethren, and light the midnight forest with the flames of their dwellings." These are but a few of the charges made against Mr. Adams by Mr. Clay himself—and can the West forget? Can Tennessee forget the memorable events of 1824, by which, with all these charges unrefuted, Andrew Jackson was defrauded of his election through the vindictive feelings of the present Whig candidate, who by this one deed, abandoned his principles, deceived Ohio, betrayed Kentucky, and bartered away the whole West for the Secretaryship, to a man whom he had denounced as wanting in all that makes up the character of a patriot, a statesman and a man? Strangely shall we be mistaken if these things be forgotten—sadly shall we be disappointed if the hand of justice do not fall where its blow is so richly deserved.

In concluding this brief sketch of the history of Mr. Polk, we are at length brought to the position in which he now stands before the people of these United States, the late National Con-

vention having named him as the *Democratic Candidate* for the PRESIDENCY, with a unanimity as honorable to him as it is the presage of a success, which will give a new impetus to those great principles of free government, for the integrity and perpetuity of which the Republican party have so long contended. The opinions of our candidate have never been concealed. Free and fearless, he has ever thrown himself upon the clear and deep stream of *Truth*, in his stern honesty, unknowing how to trim his sails but to meet the safe breeze of *principle*.

"Few public men have pursued a firmer or more consistent course than Mr. Polk. Upon several emergencies, when the current of popular opinion threatened to overwhelm him, he has sternly adhered to the convictions of duty, preferring to sink with his principles rather than rise by their abandonment. This, we have noticed, was the case after his bank report in 1833, and he incurred the same hazard when, in 1835, he avowed his unalterable purpose not to separate from the democratic party in the presidential election. On each of these occasions the popular excitement in his district would have appalled and driven back a timid and time-serving politician. Had he been governed by selfish motives; had he consulted his own personal ease and looked to his re-election alone; had he, in short, regarded success more than principle, he would have yielded his own convictions to the indications, not to be mistaken, of popular opinion. But he took counsel of nobler sentiments, and with a fearlessness characteristic of his whole public course, avowed and persisted in his well-matured determinations. Nothing can be more false than the charge of subserviency which has been brought against him, in common with the prominent supporters of the administration of General Jackson. It is true that, despising the cant of *no party*, which has ever been the pretext of selfish and treacherous politicians, and convinced that in a popular government nothing can be accomplished by isolated action, he has always acted with his party, as far as principle would justify. Upon most of the prominent measures of the administration, however, his opinions were not only generally known, but he had actually spoken or voted before the accession of General Jackson to power.

Mr. Polk is a ready debater, with a style and manner forcible and impressive. In discussion he has been always distinguished by great courtesy, never having been known to indulge in offen-

sive personality, which, considering the prominence of his course and the ardor of his convictions, is no small merit. As a proof of his exemplary assiduity, he is said never to have missed a division while occupying a seat on the floor of the House, his name being found upon every list of the *yeas* and *nays*. His ambition was to be a useful member as well as a prominent actor, and accordingly he always performed more than a full share of the active business of legislation. In person he is of middle stature, with a full, angular brow, and a quick and penetrating eye. The expression of his countenance is grave, but its serious cast is often relieved by a peculiarly pleasant smile, indicative of the amenity of his disposition. The amiable character of his private life, which has ever been upright and pure, secures to him the esteem and friendship of all who have the advantage of his acquaintance."

LIFE

OF THE

HON. GEORGE M. DALLAS.

George Mifflin Dallas was born in the city of Philadelphia on the 10th of July, 1792. He is the elder son of Alexander James Dallas, one of the most accomplished advocates and distinguished statesmen that have adorned the legal profession of the United States, or sustained, in important posts of public trust, the principles and policy of the republican party. He received the rudiments of his education at a school in Germantown, and afterward at the Friends' Academy in Philadelphia. At the age of fourteen he was entered in Princeton College, and continued there until 1810, when he was graduated with the highest honors of his class.

On leaving college, Mr. Dallas commenced the law, in the office of his father at Philadelphia; and although, in the intervals of that severe study, the more attractive forms of literature and poetry were not unfrequently cultivated, he yet persevered with unceasing application in making himself a thorough master of the great principles of the profession of which he has since been so distinguished a member. He was admitted to the bar in 1813. Soon after the declaration of war with England he had enrolled himself in a volunteer corps; and when, in the year 1813, Mr. Gallatin was appointed by President Madison a member of the commission that repaired to St. Petersburg for the purpose of negotiating a peace, under the mediation of the Emperor Alexander, he accompanied that minister as his private and confidential secretary.

In August, 1814, Mr. Dallas returned to the United States, bearing the despatches from the American commissioners, then holding their sessions at Ghent, which announced the prospects little favorable to a speedy peace that are known to have resulted from the earlier conferences with the British envoys. On his arrival he found his father transferred from the bar of Philadelphia to the head of the Treasury Department, a post requiring, in the complicated state of the finances, and amid the pressing exigencies of the war, all the resources of judgment

and talent for which he had been already distinguished, but which he was now destined to display through a brilliant administration of two years, under circumstances and in a manner that secured for him a yet larger share of the applause and confidence of the people of the United States. His son remained with him for a time at Washington, to assist him in the arduous duties of the treasury, and then returned to Philadelphia to resume, or rather to commence the actual practice of his profession, an event that was almost immediately followed by his marriage with an accomplished lady, the daughter of Mr. Nicklin, an eminent merchant of that city.

The death of his father, which occurred shortly after he retired from the administration of the Treasury Department, took from Mr. Dallas, in the outset of his career at the bar, not merely the benefit of professional assistance seldom equalled, but those kind and endearing associations which could have grown up only in intercourse with one whose genius was not more brilliant than his affections were warm.

It is scarcely necessary to remark that the exigencies of a legal life could not withdraw Mr. Dallas from the deepest interest in political topics. Deriving from the conduct and counsels of his father, and from the associations of his earliest youth, as well as those of later years, a strong attachment to the principles and views of the Democratic party, he had never failed to cooperate with his fellow citizens in the measures which were calculated to advance them. The more tranquil administration of Mr. Monroe, succeeding to the fierce political conflicts which existed during the war with England, did not present many questions that rallied party controversies on national affairs; but the election of Gov. Heister in Pennsylvania had brought the Federal party into power in that State, after a long period of Democratic ascendency, and no one embarked with more zeal than Mr. Dallas in endeavoring to effect the restoration of the policy which he believed to be essential to a sound and just administration of the affairs of the commonwealth. These efforts resulted in the triumphant re-election of Governor Schultze, the candidate of the Democratic party.

But while unanimity, followed by success, thus attended the course of his political associates in the State, the elements of division among the Democracy of the Union began to be apparent in regard to the individual who was to succeed Mr. Monroe.

Early personal associations, as well as a just appreciation of his distinguished talents, had led Mr. Dallas to unite with a large portion of his political friends in Pennsylvania in a desire that the vote of the State should be given to Mr. Calhoun; and the success with which that statesman had conducted the administration of the War Department for the eight previous years seemed to give a certain pledge, notwithstanding his comparative youth, of the ability he would display in any executive office to which the voice of his countrymen should call him. When, however, the general sentiment of the republican party throughout the Union expressed a desire to confer on the venerable patriot who had so long and so faithfully maintained their principles in various posts of civil trust, and so brilliantly augmented the glory of his country in the field of battle, Mr. Dallas, with sentiments towards General Jackson in which the friends of Mr. Calhoun in Pennsylvania at once participated, took the lead in suggesting that the younger candidate should be presented to the American people for the second office, while the united and harmonious voice of the Democratic party should name General Jackson for the presidential chair. In every measure that resulted from this determination Mr. Dallas bore a prominent part; the eloquent address in which the Democratic convention of the State presented their reasons for the course they had adopted, is generally understood to have proceeded from his pen; and when, in November, 1824, the unusually large majority of more than thirty thousand Democratic votes showed the enthusiastic feeling of the people of the State, there were few among them whose zeal had been more honorably and actively displayed than his in producing that gratifying result.

The choice of the House of Representatives having given the Presidency to Mr. Adams, the succeeding four years only contributed to create the yet stronger concentration of public opinion in favor of General Jackson; and when he obtained, in 1828, the suffrages of fifteen States, the majority in Pennsylvania had increased beyond fifty thousand. It was during this interval that Mr. Dallas received from the people of his native city an honorable mark of their confidence by an election to the mayoralty, an office which for many years past, in consequence of the usual ascendency of the Federal party, has been seldom bestowed upon a person of his political opinions.

At length, in the year 1831, a vacancy having occurred in the

representation from Pennsylvania in the Senate of the United States, the Legislature selected Mr. Dallas to fill that honorable post. Thus, in entering for the first time a legislative body, he found himself in the highest and most important assembly that exists under the provisions of the American Constitution. A new field was given to his talents as a statesman and an orator. Having at the bar of Philadelphia few equals in forensic eloquence, and being perhaps without a rival, certainly without a superior, at home, on any occasion of public and especially political discussion, he was now required to match himself with men trained by exercise as well as possessed of distinguished ability, in a scene which forbade the logical precision of a court, and yet could scarcely call forth or permit the animated current of spontaneous declamation so often successfully indulged in the lesser assemblages of his fellow citizens. His speeches in the Senate of the United States, throughout the period that he remained there, were heard with attention that gave evidence of his complete success. Those that have been more carefully reported display, on a variety of topics, striking political views, and they abound with passages of animated eloquence. The most interesting subject of general discussion was that which made the winters of 1832 and 1833 more memorable in our legislative history than any period since the war with England. The principles on which a revision of the tariff of duties was to be made gave rise, in the former session, to long and warm debates, which in the following one led to those that involved the serious question of a right of one or more of the States to nullify a law making such revision on principles that it might regard as contrary to the provisions of the constitution. On both occasions Mr. Dallas took part in these debates. On the former, after an eloquent picture of the situation and resources of the United States, he touched, with a powerful but friendly spirit, the various causes to which, independently of the policy of protection generally advocated by the northern statesmen, might be imputed the distresses that were supposed peculiarly to affect and injure the agriculture of the South. Following then the course of general opinion, as well as the declared policy of Pennsylvania, as evinced in the repeated votes of her Legislature, he presented, in a manner not often surpassed in force and clearness by those who have treated the matter in the same light, the views then entertained on the best mode of adjusting the delicate ques-

tion so as to save the South from any real injury, and yet preserve from destruction the labor and pursuits of the Northern and Middle States. When the heightened excitement of the following year produced that gloomy epoch in our fraternal annals, which was marked by serious discussions on the extent of force that the general government might exert upon the opposing laws of the States, and the consequent actions of her authorities and people, he sustained that power in the Union which he believed to be essential to its preservation, and warranted by the spirit and terms of the contract, but deprecated, in so doing, every measure not clearly necessary for those objects. On all questions appearing to involve any differences of policy or interest among the States, Mr. Dallas appears uniformly to have leaned to that course which he deemed most calculated, even at some sacrifice, to preserve the harmony of the whole.

On the 3d of March, 1833, the term expired for which he had been elected to the Senate. At his own request, his name was withheld from the legislature as a candidate for re-election. He was then selected by Governor Wolf as the Attorney General of his native State, and he continued to hold it with increasing reputation, and with a degree of approbation and confidence on the part of the whole community never exceeded, nor often equalled, until the change in the executive administration of the State, by the election of Governor Ritner, induced him to withdraw.

Mr. Dallas soon perceived the secret operations that ripened to so fatal a result, by which the Bank of the United States was imposed, by corrupt and dishonest means, on the people of the United States, and especially of Pennsylvania, as a State institution. He lent the aid of his influence and talents to resist it while he remained at Harrisburg, and on his return to Philadelphia, awakened his Democratic brethren, in public discussions, to a full sense of the danger whose near approach had been carefully concealed. The history of that disastrous measure, and the means by which its success was achieved, if not yet developed in all their details, are yet generally known. In consequence of it, the State was plunged into the long train of disasters from which its citizens have not yet been able to extricate themselves, and of which the effects, extending far beyond their immediate objects, have produced the most deplorable results on the business, prosperity, and even character of the American people.

Even after the shackles had been fixed, Mr. Dallas was among those who sought to relieve the community from so fatal a thraldom. Taking advantage of the approaching convention, when the people of the State were to meet with every attribute of original sovereignty not restrained by the Constitution of the United States, and of which the assemblage was promulgated by the vote of the people before the act in question was passed, he called to the consideration of the inhabitants of the State, in an able and eloquent letter, the propriety of examining into the frauds that had been perpetrated, and relieving the commonwealth, by an edict of that body, from all fraudulent invasions of its rights, due care being taken to protect and indemnify individuals concerned in the institution from any pecuniary loss.

The political history of the following winter was marked by the election of Mr. Van Buren to the Presidency, and one of the earliest of his acts was to offer to Mr. Dallas the post of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to Russia. In that country he remained till October, 1839. The only portion of his official correspondence while there that has been made public, is his discussion with Count Nesselrode, relative to the territories and commercial intercourse of the two nations on the coast of the Pacific Ocean. It developes several points connected with the rights of the respective governments on those shores, presented with great clearness and interest, and destined, no doubt, at a day not very distant, to become subjects of still more general and minute examination. The claims and rights of the Americans are sustained with great ability and spirit.

Since Mr. Dallas' return from Russia, he has devoted himself exclusively to the practice of his profession; and though it is generally understood, that not long after that event, a seat in his cabinet was tendered to him by Mr. Van Buren, nevertheless, he desired to remain in private life. That he will be long permitted to do so, we cannot think. He now stands before his countrymen as a candidate for the second office within their gift. The unanimous voice of the Convention which nominated him, and the response which it receives from all sections of the country, augurs well for his triumph, and the success of those principles with which he has been so long identified. To the confidence reposed in him, founded in his adherence, from earliest youth, to the accepted doctrines of the republican party on every great national question, he adds a brilliancy of genius, a spotless per-

sonal life, and qualities so calculated to win the affection and regard of all with whom he is called into association, that his native State, placing him as she does in the highest class of her favorite sons, will scarcely consent that the riper years of his life shall be withdrawn altogether from her service, and that of the people of the United States. Adorning and filling, as he would with eminent distinction, the most exalted offices that his fellow-citizens can bestow, their hope is certainly as general as it is reasonable and just, that none of the accidents which hang upon all human footsteps may withhold him from the honorable discharge of those public trusts, which are conferred by the willing suffrages of a free people, upon those among them who have been found to be the most deserving.

APPENDIX.

DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION.

BALTIMORE, MAY, 1844.

Resolved, That the American Democracy place their trust not in factitious symbols, not in displays and appeals insulting to the judgments and subversive of the intellect of the people, but in a clear reliance upon the intelligence, the patriotism, and the discriminating justice of the American masses.

Resolved, That we regard this as a distinctive feature of our political creed, which we are proud to maintain before the world as the great moral element in a form of government springing from, and upheld by, the popular will; and we contrast it with the creed and practice of Federalism, under whatever name or form, which seeks to palsy the will of the constituent, and which conceives no imposture too monstrous for the popular credulity.

Resolved, therefore, That, entertaining these views, the Democratic party of this Union, through their delegates assembled in a general convention of the States, coming together in a spirit of concord, of devotion to the doctrines and faith of a free representative government, and appealing to their fellow-citizens for the rectitude of their intentions, renew and re-assert before the

American people, the declaration of principles avowed by them, when on a former occasion, in general convention, they presented their candidates for the popular suffrages:

1. That the Federal Government is one of limited powers, derived solely from the Constitution, and the grants of power shown therein ought to be strictly construed by all the departments and agents of the Government, and that it is inexpedient and dangerous to exercise doubtful constitutional power.

2. That the Constitution does not confer upon the General Government the power to commence and carry on a general system of internal improvements.

3. That the Constitution does not confer authority upon the Federal Government, directly or indirectly, to assume the debts of the several States, contracted for local internal improvements, or other State purposes; nor would such assumption be just and expedient!

4. That justice and sound policy forbid the Federal Government to foster one branch of industry to the detriment of another, or to cherish the interests of one portion to the injury of another portion of our common country; that every citizen and every section of the country has a right to demand and insist upon an equality of rights and privileges, and to complete any ample protection of persons and property from domestic violence or foreign aggression.

5. That it is the duty of every branch of the Government to enforce and practise the most rigid economy in conducting our public affairs, and that no more revenue ought to be raised than is required to defray the necessary expenses of the Government.

6. That Congress has no power to charter a National Bank; that we believe such an institution one of deadly hostility to the best interests of the country, dangerous to our republican institutions and the liberties of the people, and calculated to place the business of the country within the control of a concentrated money power, and above the laws and the will of the people.

7. That Congress has no power under the Constitution to interfere with or control the domestic institutions of the several States, and that such States are the sole and proper judges of every thing appertaining to their own affairs, not prohibited by the Constitution; that all efforts of the Abolitionists or others, made to induce Congress to interfere with questions of slavery, or to take incipient steps in relation thereto, are calculated to

lead to the most alarming and dangerous consequences, and that all such efforts have an inevitable tendency to diminish the happiness of the people, and endanger the stability and permanency of the Union, and ought not to be countenanced by any friend to our political institutions.

8. That the separation of the moneys of the Government from banking institutions is indispensable for the safety of the funds of the Government and the rights of the people.

9. That the liberal principles embodied by Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence, and sanctioned in the Constitution, which make ours the land of liberty, and the asylum of the oppressed of every nation, have ever been cardinal principles in the Democratic faith; and every attempt to abridge the present privilege of becoming citizens and the owners of soil among us, ought to be resisted with the same spirit which swept the alien and sedition laws from our statute book.

Resolved, That the proceeds of the public lands ought to be sacredly applied to the national objects specified in the Constitution; and that we are opposed to the law lately adopted, and to any law, for the distribution of such proceeds among the States, as alike inexpedient in policy and repugnant to the Constitution.

Resolved, That we are decidedly opposed to taking from the President the qualified veto power by which he is enabled, under restrictions and responsibilities, amply sufficient to guard the public interest, to suspend the passage of a bill whose merits cannot secure the approval of two-thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, until the judgment of the people can be obtained thereon, and which has thrice saved the American people from the corrupt and tyrannical domination of the Bank of the United States.

Resolved, That our title to the whole of the Territory of Oregon is clear and unquestionable; that no portion of the same ought to be ceded to England or any other power; and the re-occupation of Oregon, and the re-annexation of Texas, at the earliest practicable period, are great American measures, which this convention recommends to the cordial support of the Democracy of the Union.

Resolved, That this convention hereby presents to the people of the United States JAMES K. POLK, of Tennessee, as the candidate of the Democratic party, for the office of President, and

George M. Dallas, of Pennsylvania, as the candidate of the Democratic party, for the office of Vice President of the United States.

Resolved, That this convention hold in the highest estimation and regard their illustrious fellow citizen, Martin Van Buren of New York; that we cherish the most grateful and abiding sense of the ability, integrity, and firmness with which he discharged the duties of the high office of President of the United States, and especially of the inflexible fidelity with which he maintained the true doctrines of the Constitution, and the measures of the Democratic party, during his trying and nobly arduous administration; that in the memorable struggle of 1840, he fell a martyr to the great principles of which he was the worthy representative, and revere him as such; and that we hereby tender to him, in his honorable retirement, the assurance of the deeply seated confidence, affection, and respect of the American Democracy.

MR. POLK'S SPEECH

ON THE

REMOVAL OF THE DEPOSITES.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

December 30th, 1833, *and January 6th*, 1834.

"The gentleman from South Carolina assumes that the President, in reference to the removal of the Secretary of the Treasury, has acted as a usurper and a tyrant; he did not, however, furnish us the facts on which he grounds the accusation, but argued upon them as granted. In unmeasured terms, he accused the President of tyranny, usurpation, and injustice, and seemed to be as much in a rage with him as the Dutch bully was with the lottery wheel. Like the Dutchman, he seemed ready to break every thing into smashes, and with about as much reason;—for if, in some capricious turn of fortune's wheel, the gentleman and his friends had obtained a prize, he would have pronounced it 'as fair a thing as ever was.' It was easy to call hard names, but the President had too long and too faithfully served his country to be within the reach of such assaults. But the President is a usurper and a tyrant, and the Secretary of the Treasury, we are assured, is not responsible to the President, and is independent of him. Now, I affirm, said Mr. P., that the Se-

cretary of the Treasury is not independent of the President; and, furthermore, that if Congress should undertake to render him so, by express law, they would exceed their power, and their act would be void. Yes, sir, I affirm that the Secretary of the Treasury is not independent. The Secretary is appointed by the Executive authority of the country. I beg pardon of the House for entering into an argument to prove what has been acquiesced in for forty years—that the Secretary of the Treasury is dependent upon the President. Do gentlemen mean to say that the President has not the power to remove the Secretary of the Treasury from office? The Constitution, on this point, says: 'The President shall nominate, and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors or other public ministers, &c., and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law. But the Congress may, by law, vest the appointment of such inferior officers as they think proper in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of Department.' The heads of Department were not inferior officers, and Congress had no right to appoint them; Congress had no right to appoint any officer, and, further, they had no right to invest themselves with the power of appointing any officer. By what tenure does the Secretary of the Treasury hold his office? Although there was no express power given in the Constitution for the removal of that officer, yet it was evident that he held the office '*durante bene placito*'—during the pleasure of the President. The Judges of the Supreme Court hold their office by a different tenure,—during good behavior, and from that express provision he derived an argument that the Secretary of the Treasury did not hold by that tenure, but at the pleasure of the President. The tenure of the President and Vice President was expressly settled by the Constitution—they hold for a term of years. But other officers hold during pleasure,—so it was understood by the framers of the Constitution, and so it has been understood ever since. The appointing power is the Executive power, and the appointing power must necessarily be the removing power. If the one branch had the power of appointment and another of removal, endless confusion would be produced in the Government. The President 'shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed;' can he do this by authorizing each officer to execute the law according to his own understanding? In that

case there would be no uniformity or consistency in the action of the Government. One Secretary would execute the embargo law, but another would say that in his conscience, he believed the law to be unconstitutional, and therefore he was not bound to enforce it. Was it contemplated that each of the inferior officers should construe the law for himself? Did the Constitution mean, as had been elsewhere suggested, merely to empower the President to put down resistance to the laws. Unquestionably this was one of his duties. But the President, I affirm, cannot see that the laws are faithfully executed, except as he understood them, and it was necessary for him to remove those assistants whose construction of the law differed from his own, and to put others in their places. Else, how had it happened, upon the accession of each new President, that a new cabinet was appointed. Else, how in the great political revolution of 1801, could the new President have brought into office a cabinet of his own; and, how, without a new cabinet, would he have provided for the faithful execution of the laws? Sir, said Mr. Polk, these are questions so long settled, that I fear I weary the House by referring to them. How happens it that the President is authorized to require the opinion of his cabinet in writing, if he has not a supervising power over them? The power of removal is left with the President, because he is the Chief Executive, and is responsible to the country for the faithful execution of the laws.

"If he had succeeded in making himself understood, he had shown, that the exercise of the power by the Secretary of the Treasury was only the exercise of an ordinary and usual power. The President had also exercised the usual and ordinary power; he had removed the Secretary of the Treasury for refusing to act. But he begged pardon, if the argument of the member from South Carolina was good. Mr. Duane was still Secretary; Mr. Taney had no authority at all. He, however, would contend, that Mr. D. was removed by the exercise of power that the President possessed, that this removal was a matter of right, devolving upon the President, he having refused to act in conformity to his directions. Upon his removal, Mr. Taney is appointed; the removal is made by him, or by his order, and yet it was asked by the member from South Carolina (Mr. McDuffie), 'Was it the Secretary who did this act? No; it was the act of a tyrant, forsooth, and the Secretary had no more agency in

it than the iron pen with which the order was written.' But he (Mr. P.) would state, that it was fortunate for the country—most fortunate for the individual himself, that his character stood too high to require any thing to be added by him, or which would render it necessary to say more, than that the present Secretary was not the person to be rendered the mere blind instrument of any man, be he whom he might. He was not such a blind instrument as was charged in this transaction. He could state, as he was authorized to do, that the opinions given by him, and upon which he had acted in the removal, were similar to those given by him, in writing, in the month of March previous, when he was Attorney General, when consulted upon the subject as a Cabinet minister. Well, then, was he to be blamed, and thus stigmatized, for having honestly entertained the opinion that the deposites ought to be removed—for removing them—when upon the refusal of Mr. Duane, and his dismissal, that he, appointed his successor, should do so? Yet for this removal a question upon which his mind had been long made up—he was 'the miserable instrument of tyranny!'—he was to be stigmatized as 'one of those miserable sycophants who literally crawled in their own slime, to the foot-stool of Executive favor.'

"But it was objected, in the argument of the gentleman from South Carolina, that to withdraw the public deposites from the bank of the United States, and to place them in the State banks, was a union of the purse and the sword—this was the old argument to which he adverted the other day, brought up in the debate, which occurred in the Congress of 1789, upon the organization of the Executive departments—an argument which had then been successfully met by Mr. Madison and other distinguished patriots, who were members of the Congress at that period. But it was said by the gentleman, that the President had seized upon the public moneys—and we were asked where was the public treasure? Now it is well known that the President has no more control over the public money in deposite in State banks than he had while they were in deposite in the United States bank. By the Constitution no money can be drawn from the Treasury but in consequence of appropriations made by law. The President could not, therefore, if he would, any more use a dollar now, than he could before the deposites were removed. This is the mere phantom of an excited mind or of a disordered imagination. The gentleman imagines great danger from the

Executive influence over the State banks, in which the public moneys may be deposited—and yet did not the same power exist in the President of the United States, from the organization of the Government, up to the close of Mr. Monroe's administration; and were any such dangerous consequences ever felt as the gentleman seems now to imagine? During the existence of the old bank charter, the Executive Department of the Government directed at will, the place of public deposite for the public moneys, and the places of deposite were changed at pleasure during the administration of Mr. Monroe, and that of all his predecessors. Since the present bank was chartered, the same power was claimed and repeatedly exercised by Mr. Crawford, as abundantly shown the other day from the documentary history of the times. Yet, the dangerous consequences now apprehended, were never found to flow from the exercise of that power. But the gentleman has informed us that every one knows that the President of a State bank, which is made a public depository, will be controlled by the Federal Executive; that every one knows that the President of a bank controls and governs the debtors to that bank; that the city debtors to the bank control the country dealers who are indebted to them, and the country dealers control their country debtors. The chain, he says, is a very short one by which the whole country indebted directly, or indirectly, to a State bank, which is a place of public deposite, will be controlled by the Executive authority here. This is, indeed, a fanciful picture; but did not the gentleman reflect, that according to his own argument, the same power which he deprecates in the State banks, in fact exists to a much greater extent in the Bank of the United States? The Bank of the United States possesses a great central power, controlling, by the will of a single man, all its ramifications and branches in every portion of the Union; it is, too, an irresponsible power, which can act by its different branches in perfect concert, in different portions of the Union at the same moment. Whereas the State Banks have no such central power to control or direct their concerted movements. In fact the State Banks, from the necessary and inevitable collision of their interests, must counteract and control the movements of each other, even if they were disposed to become the prostituted instruments of political party. The President of the United States is responsible to the people; the Bank of the United States acknowledges no responsibility either to the Go-

vernment or to the people; but he utterly denied that the State Banks either had been, or could be, the instruments of party. The real danger to be apprehended, was from the Bank of the United States; which, if the argument of the gentleman from South Carolina be true, was enabled to control all who were either directly or indirectly indebted to it.

"The gentleman from South Carolina gave us another reason why the public deposites should not be removed from the Bank of the United States. He had stated that the Government of the United States, being the owner of one-fifth of the stock of the United States Bank, would lose 140,000 dollars yearly by the withdrawal of the deposites. He supposed he meant by the diminution of the Government, dividends derived from the use of the deposites by the Bank. He should not stop to inquire upon what *data* the gentleman had this information, but for the sake of the argument would take it to be true, as he had stated it. It then, would, in fact lose $140,000 per annum by this diminution of its dividend, derivable from the use of the public deposites, by the Bank, then we have a data by which to estimate the value of the renewal of the bank charter for 20 years. If the Government would lose $140,000 for a single year, its loss for a period of 20 years would be 2,800,000 dollars. The Government owning but one-fifth of the stock, the whole loss to the Bank would be five times that amount, or fourteen millions of dollars. Fourteen millions then, according to the argument, is the value of the renewal of the Bank charter for twenty years arising from the public deposites alone, and independent of the value of the exclusive privileges of banking conferred by the charter, and yet the gentleman from South Carolina, two years ago, sustained by his vote the previous question, twice in the same day, to confer upon the present stockholders the renewal of the present charter, for a period of 20 years for a *bonus* of three millions; he did this, too, when other capitalists, by their memorials before Congress, offered a much larger *bonus* for similar privileges. The effects of making deposites in the State Banks will be, (said Mr. P.) that the profits will not go, as they now do, into the pockets of foreigners, but will remain in the country for the benefit of our own citizens. It is well known that a large amount of Bank stock is owned abroad, and a large amount in specie is annually transported from the country.

"Mr. P. said he feared he should fatigue the House, as he

knew he had himself, and must therefore close his remarks. We are called on, Mr. Speaker, to decide a question of no ordinary import. The Bank of the United States has set itself up as a great irresponsible rival power of the Government. It assumes to regulate the finances of the country, and to control the whole policy of government in the regulation of the financial concerns of the country: it assumes to dictate to the country, in effect, how its Government shall be administered: and although it has used the public moneys entrusted to its hands, for safe keeping, for purposes of political corruption, it comes here to demand, as a matter of right, that the public treasure shall be restored to it—it has wasted the public money: it has thrown itself into the arena of politics, and employed its corporate wealth, corruptly to control elections: it has been a faithless fiscal agent, in paying out the public moneys, when demanded for the public service: it has violated its charter, by delegating to secret committees, powers, which of right can only be exercised by the board of directors; it refused to submit its affairs to the scrutiny of impartial investigation and truth, under the heaviest charges of corruption and mal-practices made against it, and boldly demands at the hands of the representatives of the people, that it be permitted to continue in the use of the public funds.—It is a great aristocracy of money, which in all ages of the world has allied itself with the enemies of liberty. Gentlemen must not deceive themselves; the present is in substance and in fact, the question of recharter or no recharter. The question is in fact, whether we shall have the Republic, without the Bank, or the Bank without the Republic. It has done more, sir, in its manifesto officially issued by its board; it has undertaken to lecture the representatives of the people, on political economy, and to *doctrinate* (if I may be permitted to use the term,) Congress, in regard to the constitutional powers of the different departments of Government. It assumes with the gentleman from South Carolina, that the President is a tyrant, an usurper—that the Treasury is independent of the Executive, and that he has wantonly removed one Secretary from office and appointed another.

"The very fact that it requires any effort to expose its enormities to the universal indignation of a virtuous people, proves it not only to be a vast power, but a dangerous power, in a country which boasts of the purity of its institutions. It is my

deliberate conviction, that if the power and monopoly of the present Bank be continued for another twenty years, it will be the veriest despot that ever ruled over any land, a despotism of money, without responsibility. No man, hereafter, can expect to arrive at the first station in this great republic, without first making terms with the despot. It will control your election of President, of your Senators, and of your Representatives. If such was its power when it stood in the position of an antagonist to the Government, what would it be in the hands of corrupt men, at the head of affairs, whom it would prostitute itself to serve, and whom it could bend to its own purposes.

"After some further remarks, Mr. P. said he trusted in God, that the country might be saved from a despotism such as this; from the blighting influence of this most corrupt and corrupting institution that ever existed under the sun; an institution whose practices and principles were alike inimical to the existence of free Government."

MR. POLK'S SPEECH

ON THE

MAYSVILLE VETO.

MAY 28, 1830.

"The violent, vindictive, and unprecedented character of the remarks which had just fallen from the member from Ohio [Mr. Stanbery] had opened the whole discussion. That member took occasion, in the most violent manner, to say that the message of the chief magistrate was a low, undignified, electioneering paper; that it had nothing honest in it; that it had nothing candid or open in it; that it was the work of his ministry, and not of himself; that the hand of the magician was to be seen in every line of it.

"Mr. P. said he took the liberty to say to the member from Ohio that this violent torrent of abuse, poured upon the head of the chief magistrate, was gratuitous, and wholly unjustifiable, not sustained in a single particular by the truth, and wholly unfounded in fact.

"The member himself did not, and could not believe one word of what he had just uttered in the face of the house and of the nation. No man in the nation, of any party, who knows the

character of the President, believed what the gentleman charged upon him. He was glad that the member had at length thrown off the cloak under which he had covertly acted during the present session. He had been elected to his seat here by the friends of the President. If he was correctly informed, he came into this house upon the popularity of the venerable man whom he now so wantonly assailed. He came here professing to give to his administration a fair and an honest support—professing to be enumerated among his political friends. Had he sustained one single measure which the President recommended? Not one—and it was matter of no regret that the member had at length thrown off the mask. He cannot claim this occasion, or this bill, as a pretext for his desertion from his former professed political attachments. What was there in this occasion to call forth such a tirade of abuse? The President has returned to this house, as it was his constitutional right, and, entertaining the opinion he did, his duty to do, a bill which had passed Congress, and been presented to him for his constitutional sanction. He had, in a very temperate, and, he added, in a very able manner, assigned the reasons why he had felt himself constrained, from a high sense of public duty, to withhold his signature and sanction from it. We are called upon by an imperative provision of the constitution to reconsider the vote by which a majority of this house had agreed to pass the bill. The bill and the message of the President were the fair subjects of deliberation and discussion for this house. We were now called upon to discharge a high constitutional duty on our part. Had the member discussed, or even pretended to discuss, a single principle contained in the message or in the bill? No! He had chosen to make a most wanton attack upon the President. Why was the member from Ohio thrown into such a rage? Was it because the system of which this bill is a part was so dear to him? Does he not know, will he deny it, that he has heretofore professed to be opposed to this whole system? In the last Congress he was a member of the committee on manufactures. He voted for the tariff, and ostensibly supported it; but did he not then openly say to many gentlemen (not in confidence, for, if it had been so, he would be the last man to betray that confidence,) that he was opposed to the whole American system—that it was nothing but a political hobby? Did he not say that he would return home and revolutionize public opinion in his own district, and in the

whole state of Ohio; that a delusion existed in that State that could and should be removed; that he had never conversed with a plain, farming man, and explained to him the operations of this American system, but that he convinced him that it was against his interest to support it? Would the gentleman deny this? If he would venture to do it, he pledged himself to prove it upon him by many members of this house. It was not, then, the attachment of the gentleman to this system that could have induced him to throw into the house the fire-brand that he had. That pretext cannot shield him. He best knows the real cause of his present course. He best knows whether he was ever, in truth and in fact, the sincere friend of the President, or whether he found it convenient to profess to be his friend in order to obtain his election to this house. The member had formed new associations recently—associations with our old political adversaries; and he was glad, for the future, to know who he was, and where to find him. A covert political adversary was much more insidious and dangerous than one that openly avowed himself, and acted upon his professions. He had to beg the pardon of the house for any apparent warmth which his manner may have indicated. It had been wholly induced by the most unexpected torrent of abuse which fell from the member from Ohio, so uncalled for by the occasion, so unnecessary and uncertain in its character, and which produced so visible a sensation in the house, on all sides of it, and among all parties in it. That member was wholly responsible for the excitement which it was apparent pervaded the whole house.

"The message of the President, he undertook to state, was emphatically his own; and the views presented for the rejection of this bill were the result of the honest convictions of his own deliberate reflection. Was it an electioneering measure? No man who knows his character will believe it. The common sense of the nation will put to shame the charge. What! an electioneering measure! a popularity-hunting scheme! Why, sir, if he had been so base, in the discharge of a high constitutional duty, as to have been operated upon by such a motive, the indications in this Congress—the will of the people, if that will be correctly reflected here, a majority of whose representatives originally voted for this bill—would have presented the most powerful motive why he should have approved and signed this bill. No, sir, the President would not be himself, if he had been capable of

being influenced in the slightest degree by any such considerations. Such considerations have no place in minds of the elevated cast of that of the chief magistrate. Such considerations are only suited to the bent of such grovelling minds as are themselves capable of making the charge. No, sir, on the contrary, on the brink of a great crisis, at a period of unusual political excitement,—to save his country from what he conscientiously believed to be a dangerous infraction of the constitution—to avert the evils which threatened, in its consequences, the long continuance of the confederacy upon its original principles,—he had, with a patriotism never surpassed, boldly and firmly staked himself, his present and his future popularity and fame, against what seemed to be the current of public opinion. Had he signed this bill, the road on which he would have travelled would have been a broad pavement, and his continued elevation certain beyond the possibility of doubt. As it was, he had planted himself upon the ramparts of the constitution, and had taken the high responsibility upon himself to check the downward march in which the system of which this bill is a part was fast hastening us. It required just such a man, in such times, to restore the constitution to its original reading. In the course of a long and eventful life he had always been equal to any emergency, however perplexing or embarrassing his situation might be. He had never failed to assume responsibility when he should assume it; and in no instance in his public life had he displayed in a more eminent degree that moral courage and firmness of character so peculiarly characteristic of him, than in this. He has achieved a civil victory which will shed more lustre upon his future fame, and be infinitely more durable, than many such victories as that of the battle of Orleans, for, by this single act, he verily believed he had done more than any man in this country, for the last thirty years, to preserve the constitution and to perpetuate the liberties we enjoy. The constitution was, he hoped, to be again considered and practised upon, as it, in fact, was one of limited powers, and the States permitted to enjoy all the powers which they originally intended to reserve to themselves in that compact of union. The pernicious consequences, the evil tendencies, to say nothing of the corrupting influence of the exercise of a power over internal improvements by the federal government, were not fully developed until within a very few years last past. Mr. Madison, on the last day of his term of

office, put his veto on the bonus bill. In the following year Mr. Monroe rejected a bill assuming jurisdiction and fixing tolls on the Cumberland road. The subject of the power was discussed at great length and with great ability in the next Congress. The House of Representatives, by a small majority, at that time affirmed the power to appropriate money for objects of national improvement, but denied, and by the vote of the house negatived, the power to construct roads or canals of any character, whether military, commercial, or for the transportation of the mail. It was not until the last administration that the broad power to the extent now claimed, limited only by the arbitrary discretion of Congress, was asserted and attempted to be maintained by the Executive and by Congress. It was not until that period that its dangers were fully perceived. The President had manifested, in the message before us, that he had been an attentive observer of its progress, and its probable, if not its inevitable, consequences. He could not shut his eyes to the constant collisions, the heart-burnings, the combinations, and the certain corruption to which its continual exercise would tend, both in and out of Congress. In the conscientious discharge of a constitutional duty, which he was not at liberty to decline, he had withheld his signature from this bill, and had frankly submitted to us his views upon this important question; and he trusted we would deliberate upon it temperately, as we should, and, in the vote which we were about to give upon the reconsideration of this bill, according to the powers of the constitution, express the opinions which we entertain, and not make a false issue, growing out of a personal assault upon the character or motives of the chief magistrate."

COLONEL POLK'S LETTER

ON TEXAS.

COLUMBIA, TENN. *April* 23, 1844.

GENTLEMEN: Your letter of the 30th ult. which you have done me the honor to address to me, reached my residence during my absence from home, and was not received until yesterday. Accompanying your letter, you transmit to me, as you state, "a copy of the proceedings of a very large meeting of the citizens of Cincinnati, assembled on the 29th instant, to express their settled opposition to the annexation of Texas to the United States." You request from me an explicit expression of opinion upon this question of annexation. Having at no time entertained opinions upon public subjects which I was unwilling to avow, it gives me pleasure to comply with your request. I have no hesitation in declaring that I am in favor of the *immediate re-annexation* of Texas to the territory and Government of the United States. I entertain no doubts as to the power or expediency of the re-annexation. The proof is clear and satisfactory to my mind that Texas once constituted a part of the territory of the United States, the title to which I regard to have been as indisputable as that to any other portion of our territory. At the time the negotiation was opened with a view to acquire the Floridas, and the settlement of other questions, and pending that negotiation the Spanish Government itself was satisfied of the validity of our title, and was ready to recognize a line far west of the Sabine as the true western boundary of Louisiana, as defined by the treaty of 1803 with France, under which Louisiana was acquired. This negotiation, which had been first opened at Madrid, was broken off and transferred to Washington, where it was resumed, and resulted in the treaty of Florida, by which the Sabine was fixed on as the western boundary of Louisiana. From the ratification of the treaty of 1803 with France, until the treaty of 1819 with Spain, the territory now constituting the republic of Texas belonged to the United States. In 1819 the Florida treaty was concluded at Washington by

Mr. John Quincy Adams, (the Secretary of State) on the part of the United States, and Don Louis de Onis on the part of Spain; and by that treaty this territory lying west of the Sabine, and constituting Texas, was ceded by the United States to Spain. The Rio Del Norte, or some more western boundary than the Sabine, could have been obtained had it been insisted on by the American Secretary of State, and that without increasing the consideration paid for the Floridas. In my judgment, the country west of the Sabine, and now called Texas, was most unwisely ceded away. It is a part of the great valley of the Mississippi, directly connected by its navigable waters, with the Mississippi river; and having once been a part of our Union, it should never have been dismembered from it. The Government and people of Texas, it is understood, not only give their consent, but are anxiously desirous, to be re-united to the United States. If the application of Texas for a re-union and admission into our confederacy shall be rejected by the United States there is imminent danger that she will become a dependency, if not a colony, of Great Britain—an event which no American patriot, anxious for the safety and prosperity of this country, could permit to occur without the most strenuous resistance. Let Texas be re-annexed, and the authority and laws of the United States be established and maintained within her limits, as also in the Oregon Territory, and let the fixed policy of our Government be, not to permit Great Britain or any other foreign power to plant a colony or hold dominion over any portion of the people or territory of either. These are my opinions; and without deeming it to be necessary to extend this letter, by assigning the many reasons which influence me in the conclusions to which I come, I regret to be compelled to differ so widely from the views expressed by yourselves, and the meeting of citizens of Cincinnati, whom you represent. Differing, however, with you and with them as I do, it was due to frankness that I should be thus explicit in the declaration of my opinions.

I am, with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES K. POLK.

To Messrs. S. P. Chase,

Thomas Heaton, &c.

Committee, Cincinnati.

END.

MR. POLK'S OPINIONS ON THE TARIFF.

The opinions of Mr. Polk on this subject may be summed up in a few words. In a speech delivered at Jackson, Tennessee, on the 3d April, 1843, after a full discussion of the question, he concluded his argument by the following condensed declaration:

"He [Col. Polk] was OPPOSED TO DIRECT TAXES, and to prohibitory and protective duties, and in favor of such *moderate* duties as would not cut off importations. IN OTHER WORDS, HE WAS IN FAVOR OF REDUCING THE DUTIES TO THE RATES OF THE COMPROMISE ACT, WHERE THE WHIG CONGRESS FOUND THEM ON THE 30th OF JUNE, 1842."

Here is no non-committal. But, while the Whigs have been the first to call up this opinion for political effect, they seem to have forgotten how concurrently it runs with the views of Mr. Clay himself, as expressed by him in a speech made in the Senate on the 21st January, 1842. The language is taken from the *National Intelligencer*, Mr. C's especial organ. It is for Mr. Polk's opponents to say whether this is the *honest* opinion of their candidate. If it be, let them compare it with Mr. P's declaration, and draw the distinction, if they can. If it is not, let them then settle the question of truthfulness with the people.

Extract from Mr. Clay's Speech.

"Carry out then, said he, the spirit of the Compromise Act. Look to Revenue alone for the support of Government. Do not raise the question of Protection, which I had hoped had been put to rest. THERE IS NO NECESSITY OF PROTECTION FOR PROTECTION."

Now, this is our doctrine, "Carry out the spirit of the Compromise Act," as Mr. Clay says:—"Reduce the duties to the rates of the Compromise Act," as says Mr. Polk:—"I am for supporting the Compromise Act, and never will agree to its being altered or repealed," as General Harrison said, in the following letter:

"Zanesville, *November* 2, 1836.

"Gentlemen:—I had the honor, this moment, to receive your communication of yesterday. I regret that my remarks of yesterday were misunderstood in regard to the tariff system. What I meant to convey was, that I had been a warm advocate for that system upon its first adoption; that I still believe in the benefits it had conferred upon the country. But I certainly never had, nor ever could have, any idea of reviving it. What I said was, that I would not agree to the repeal *as it now stands.* In other words, *I am for supporting the Compromise Act,* and *never will agree to its being altered or repealed.*

"In relation to the internal improvement system, I refer you for my sentiments to my letter to the Hon. Sherrod Williams.

"I am, in great haste, with great respect, your fellow citizen.

"WM. H. HARRISON.

"Messrs. Foster, Taylor, and others."

The Whig party have no settled principles in regard to the Tariff. In the north and east, amongst the *manufacturers*, they avow themselves in favor of a "HIGH PROTECTIVE AND PROHIBITORY TARIFF." While Mr. Clay and his satellites are thus flattering these monopolists, they speak thus of the farmers:

CLAY'S OPINION OF FARMERS.—"*Agriculture needs no protection.* The habits of farmers, generation after generation, pass down a long track of time, in perpetual succession, without the slightest change; and the *ploughman who fastens his plough to the tail of his cattle will not acknowledge that there is any improvement equal to his.*"

In the south and west, amongst the farmers and planters, this is their doctrine:

"The prohibition of the fabrics of foreign countries would transfer the monopoly to the home manufacturers in the United States. *The true interests of the consumers are best promoted by a competition between the foreign and the national supply.* The inevitable tendency of that competition is to reduce prices, as all experience has demonstrated."—*Mr. Clay at New Orleans, to a committee of his Whig friends in Virginia, dated Jan. 23, 1844.*

Col. Polk and the Democratic party entertain the same opinions in all sections of the country. They are in favor of reviving the "compromise act." The same doctrine which Mr. Clay upholds in the south and west, as affording sufficient protection, but which he and his friends denounce so violently in the north and east, among the manufacturers and capitalists. The following is an extract from Col. Polk's speech on the Tariff, delivered in the House of Representatives in 1833:

"No member of the committee (of which he was one) who yielded his assent to this bill, I may safely affirm, desires to prostrate the manufacturer, nor will such, in their judgment, be the effect of the bill. I venture to affirm that the bill, so far from prostrating these establishments, affords sufficient INCIDENTAL PROTECTION to enable all such as are based on real, not borrowed, capital, and which are conducted with economy and skill, not only to stand, under this bill, but to *realize greater rates of profit upon the capital and labor employed, than it derived from any other regular business in the country.*"

MR. DALLAS ON ANNEXATION.

The following letter was written by the Hon. GEORGE M. DALLAS, in reply to a letter of invitation from the Democracy of Pittsburgh city and county to unite with them in celebrating the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans.

"*Gentlemen*—I am obliged to decline the invitation with which you have honored me, to join you in celebrating the anniversary of the victory of New Orleans. Our friends of this city have arranged for a similar festivity.

"The national value of General Jackson's chief military achievement is becoming every year more obvious. Great Britain, with her usual policy, designed to close the war of 1812, as well by the capture of the key to the navigation of our western waters as by the treaty of Ghent: leaving to the uncertainties of negotiation the subsequent surrender or permanent retention of her conquest. We have severely felt the power of her protracted diplomacy on more occasions than one; and it may well be doubted whether, if her arms had secured a strong hold at the mouth of the Mississippi, the free use of that vast estuary to her commerce and political schemes, might not ultimately have been exacted as an equivalent for some imaginary and exaggerated sacrifice. Nor has experience assured us that any concession on our part to her rapacity would not be deemed by a too conciliatory administration, a better and wiser resort than war. The heroism which beat back her invasion and preserved from rapine and pollution a commercial and brilliant metropolis, filled all America with exulting delight, and commanded the applause of the world, but time is only now developing the measureless importance of that exploit to the liberties, safety, wealth, and grandeur of our republic.

"With England at New Orleans, or her steamers free to ply the waters of the Mississippi, the expansive virtues of our institutions must be fatally impeded. Who, under such circumstances, would look beyond the Sabine, or listen to the early cries of an infant commonwealth so distant because so severed from us? And yet can any one contemplate the immense sphere for freedom which Texas opens,—the progressive advancement of her population, to be protected by our laws, to be enlightened by our sciences and arts, to be fed, clothed and comforted by our husbandry, manufactures and trade, without perceiving that our constitution of government would falter in its pledges to humanity at large, if that new state, thus propitious to our own prosperity, were abandoned to

the fate of a mere colony or ministering subservient to European domination! To me, the incorporation of Texas into the Federal Union, seems not only the opening of a natural exhaustless resource for the fabrics of the eastern and middle states, the agricultural products of the southern and western, and the activity of our extensive seaboard, but it assumes the aspect of a just and necessary consequence upon the genius and maxims of our confederated system. I regard our present ability to fulfil the high duties of our political existence, in welcoming successively every community freshly formed upon the North American continent, within the circle of the national compact, as a legitimate and lineal offspring of Gen. Jackson's valor.

"The 8th of January which thus viewed, bears to the '*Great West*' a relation like that of the Fourth of July to the '*Original Thirteen*,' deserves lasting celebration:—nor is it possible to designate a place in our country, whose great and growing material interests, harmonizing with her lofty republican principles, can give to that celebration more spirit and emphasis than Pittsburgh.

"Accept then, gentlemen, the assurance of my cordial participation in the sentiments which actuate you, and of my sincere thanks for the flattering terms in which you have invited my presence at your patriotic commemoration.

"G. M. DALLAS."

Jan. 1, 1844.

COL. POLK'S OPINIONS.

The following are extracted from Gov. Polk's Inaugural Address, delivered at Nashville on the 14th of October, 1839, in presence of the two Houses of the General Assembly and a large concourse of his fellow citizens.

UNITED STATES BANK.

"The federal government has at different times assumed or attempted to exercise powers which, in my judgment, have not been conferred upon that government by the compact. Among these I am free to declare my solemn conviction that the federal government possesses no constitutional power to incorporate a national bank. The advocates of a bank insist that it would be *convenient and expedient*, and that it would promote the 'general welfare;' but they have in my judgment failed to show that the power to create it is either *expressly* granted, or

that it is an *incident* to any *express* power that is '*necessary and proper*' to carry that power into effect. The alarming dangers of the power of such a corporation (vast and irresponsible as experience has shown it to be) to the public liberty, it does not fall within the scope of my present purpose fully to examine. We have seen the power of associated wealth in the late Bank of the United States, wrestling with a giant's strength with the government itself—and although finally overthrown, it was not until after a long and doubtful contest. During the struggle, it manifested a power for mischief which it would be dangerous to permit to exist in a free country. The panic and alarm, the distress and extensive suffering which, in its convulsive struggle to perpetuate its power, it inflicted on the country, will not soon be forgotten. Its notorious alliance with leading politicians, and its open interference, by means of the corrupting power of money, in the political contests of the times, had converted it into a political engine, used to control elections and the course of public affairs. No restraints of law could prevent any similar institution from being the willing instrument used for similar purposes. The state of Tennessee, through her legislature, has repeatedly declared her settled opinions against the existence of such an institution, and at no time in its favor. She has instructed her senators and requested her representatives in Congress to vote against the establishment of such an institution. In these opinions, heretofore expressed by the state, I entirely concur."

DISTRIBUTION.

"Of the same character is the power which at some time has been attempted to be exercised by the federal government, of first collecting by taxation on the people a surplus revenue beyond the wants of that government, and then distributing such surplus in the shape of donations among the states; a power which has not been conferred on that government by any express grant, nor is it an incident to any express power 'necessary and proper' for its execution. To concede such a power, would be to make the federal government the tax-gatherer of the states, and accustom them to look to that source from which to supply the state treasuries, and to defray the expenses of the state governments. It is clear that this constituted no one of the objects of the creation of the federal government; and to permit its exercise would be to reduce the States to the degraded condition of subordinate dependencies upon that government, to destroy their separate and independent sovereignty, and to make the government of the union in effect a consolidation. The power to make provision for the support of its own gov-

ernment, by the levy of the necessary taxes upon its own citizens, and the adoption of such measures of policy for its internal government not inconsistent with the federal constitution, as may be deemed proper and expedient, 'remains to each state among its domestic and unalienated powers exercisable within itself, and by its domestic authorities alone.'"

PROTECTIVE TARIFF.

"A surplus federal revenue, raised by means of a tariff of duties, must necessarily be collected in unequal proportions from the people of the respective states. The planting and producing states must bear the larger portion of the burden. It was this inequality which has heretofore given rise to the just complaints of these states, as also of the commercial interests, against the operations of a high and protective tariff. If the proceeds of the sales of the public lands be set apart for distribution among the states, as has been sometimes proposed, the operation and effect would be the same; for, by abstracting from the federal treasury the proceeds of the sales of the public lands, a necessity is thereby created for an increased tariff to the amount thus abstracted. To collect a surplus revenue by unequal taxation, and then to return to the people, by a distribution among the states, their own money, in sums diminished by the amount of the cost of collection and distribution, aside from its manifest injustice, is a power which it could never have been intended to confer on the federal government.

"When, from the unforeseen operation of the revenue laws of the United States, a surplus at any time exists or is likely to exist in the federal treasury, the true remedy is to reduce or to repeal the taxes so as to collect no more money than shall be absolutely necessary for the economical wants of that government, and thus leave what would otherwise be surplus uncollected in the pockets of the people. The act of Congress of 1836, by which a large amount of the surplus on hand was distributed among the states, is upon its face a *deposite*, and not a *donation*, of the sums distributed. The states have become the debtors to the federal government for their respective proportions, and are subject to be called upon to refund it. Had the act provided for an absolute *donation* to the states, so palpable an infraction of the constitution it is scarcely possible to conceive could have been sanctioned. By making it assume the form of a mere *deposite* of the money of the United States in the state treasuries for safe keeping until needed for public purposes, it became the law. Though it may not be probable that the sums distributed on deposite will be called for at an early period, if indeed they will ever be, unless in cases of ex-

igencies growing out of a foreign war, yet the states should be at all times prepared to meet the call when made; and it will be unsafe for them to rely upon the sums they have received as a permanent fund. They should rather look to their own credit and resources in the accomplishment of their purposes."

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

"It becomes the duty of all the states, and especially of those whose constitutions recognize the existence of domestic slavery, to look with watchfulness to the attempts which have been recently made to disturb the rights secured to them by the constitution of the United States. The agitation of the abolitionists can by no possibility produce good to any portion of the union, and must, if persisted in, lead to incalculable mischief. The institution of domestic slavery, as it existed at the adoption of the constitution of the United States, and as it still exists in some of the states, formed the subject of one of the compromises of opinion and of interest upon the settlement of which all the old states became parties to the compact, and agreed to enter the union. The new states were admitted into the union upon an equal footing with the old states, and are equally bound by the terms of the compact. Any attempt on the part of the federal government to act upon the subject of slavery, as it exists within the states, would be a clear infraction of the constitution; and to disturb it within the district of Columbia would be a palpable violation of the public faith, as well as of the clear meaning and obvious intention of the framers of the constitution. They intended to leave, as they did in fact leave, the subject to the exclusive regulation and action of the states and territories within which slavery existed or might exist. They intended to place, and they did in fact place it beyond the pale of action within the constitutional power of the federal government. No power has been conferred upon the general government, either by express grant or necessary implication, to take cognizance of, or in any manner or to any extent to interfere with, or to act upon the subject of domestic slavery, the existence of which in many of the states is expressly recognized by the constitution of the United States."

YOUNG HICKORY.

Extract from the Speech of the Hon. S. A. Douglass *of Illinois, delivered on the 3d of June, 1844, in reply to his colleague, Gen. Hardin.*

Mr. Douglass said he had not allowed himself to participate in any of the political discussions which had occupied so much of the session, and had not intended to say any thing on the present occasion, until he listened to the speech of his colleague (Mr. Hardin), who had just taken his seat. His colleague seemed ambitious to distinguish himself as the leader of his party in the presidential campaign, and he was happy to say that he had succeeded in acquiring considerable notoriety in that way. Early in the session, it will be recollected, he made a speech, or rather wrote a book, for the especial benefit of Mr. Van Buren, under the impression that that eminent statesman would be the democratic nominee for the presidency. The action of the Baltimore Convention, in the nomination of another distinguished citizen for that exalted station, has taken my colleague by surprise, and turned all his hopes of a glorious immortality, from the Court, into bitter disappointment. His stories, anecdotes, and witticisms, even when they may be admired for their elegance and beauty, have lost their force, and even those beautiful pictures, in which he represented himself and Mr. Van Buren as standing side by side at an election, have become offensive in his own eyes. It is truly a sad disappointment: the loss of his first born political speech. To a man of delicate feelings and keen sensibility it is indeed a severe affliction—one under which, as we have seen, the stoutest heart and the firmest nerves sink almost in despair. I deeply sympathize with my colleague in his misfortune, and on this account excuse, as no doubt the house will, the almost savage ferocity with which he has pounced upon Col. Polk as the Democratic candidate for the presidency. The provocation is very great, and some indulgence is due to the passions and frailties of human nature. Although the exhibitions of this day might seem to justify a different opinion, I assure the house that my colleague, if not provoked and irritated, is naturally a very amiable man.

I propose, so far as my time will permit, to analyze the assaults upon Col. Polk, and see how far they will bear the test of investigation. It is a source of gratification that they are all of a political nature; none of them affecting his private and moral character. I have witnessed with feelings of pride and pleasure the complete and unequivocal evidence which his political adversaries have borne to his moral worth and purity of character, as a gentleman and a citizen.

The first severe thrust my colleague aimed at Col. Polk was that, when compared with Mr. Van Buren, "he was but a pigmy beside a giant." I was not aware that my colleague considered Mr. Van Buren a "giant." I find nothing of this kind in his former speech, nor did I suppose that he so truly appreciated the moral greatness and intellectual power of that illustrious man. I confess myself agreeably disappointed, as I have no doubt the people of Illinois will be, when they learn that those who have been the most industrious in abusing and traducing Mr. Van Buren, have discovered that he is not only a great man, but even a giant, when compared with his distinguished countrymen. But a few weeks ago, when Mr. Van Buren was supposed to be a candidate for the presidency, he was a mere pigmy; but now he has become a giant, and Col. Polk is the pigmy. When Col. Polk shall have served his presidential term, and retired to private life, I suppose he, in his turn, will become the giant, and his Democratic successor the pigmy, in the estimation of my honorable colleague. It has been objected to Col. Polk, by authority equally high, and entitled to about the same weight, that "he was an industrious follower of Gen. Jackson throughout his whole life;" and in consequence of the intimate personal relations between them, as well as the perfect concurrence in their political opinions, and principles, and action, he has been called the "YOUNG HICKORY," as if there were something in that name calculated to excite a prejudice in the minds of the American people. He is emphatically a Young Hickory. The unwavering friend of Old Hickory in all his trials—his bosom companion—his supporter and defender on all occasions, in public and in private, from his early boyhood until the present moment. No man living possessed General Jackson's confidence in a greater degree, or displayed more zeal and ability in defending his fame from the slanders of his enemies, and in carrying out the great republican principles with which his administration was identified. It is not surprising, therefore, that those enemies should direct their vengeance at the head of Col. Polk, and sneeringly call him the "Young Hickory." That he has been the industrious follower of General Jackson in those glorious contests for the defence of his country's rights, will not be deemed the unpardonable sin by the American people, so long as their hearts beat and swell with gratitude to their great benefactor. He is the very man for the times—"a chip of the old block," of the true hickory stump. The people want a man whose patriotism, honesty, ability, and devotion to Democratic principles have been tested and tried in the most stormy times of the republic, and never found wanting. That man is James K. Polk of Tennessee.